THE

BISHOP of *SARUM's*

Thankſgiving Sermon,

December 31. 1706.

A SERMON

Preach'd before the

QUEEN,

AND THE

Two Houses of Parliament,

AT

St. *PAUL*'s

On the 31st of *December*, 1706.

The Day of Thanksgiving

FOR THE

Wonderful Successes of this Year.

By the Right Reverend Father in God,
GILBERT, Lord Bishop of *Sarum*.

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Psalm lxxii. Verse 4.

He shall judge the Poor of the People, he shall defend the Children of the Needy, and shall break in pieces the Oppressor.

THIS Psalm begins with a Prayer for *Solomon*, and contains many Prophecies relating to his glorious peaceable Reign: Most of these belong plainly to him, and were literally accomplished in him: But in some the Spirit of Prophecy pointed farther to the *Messias*. The *Jewish* Masters themselves think that *Solomon* is here set forth as a Type of the *Messias*, and that these Prophecies were to have a fuller Accomplishment in a more August manner in Him.

The words that follow my Text can be no otherwise understood, *They shall fear thee as long as the Sun and Moon endureth, throughout all Generations:* So also these; *His Name shall* Ver. 17. *endure for ever, his Name shall be continued as long as the Sun: Men shall be blessed in him, all Nations shall call him Blessed.* The Rapture with which the Psalm concludes, is too high for any thing lower than this: *Blessed be the Lord*

Lord God of Israel, who only doth wondrous things: And blessed be his glorious Name for ever, and let the whole Earth be filled with his Glory, Amen and Amen. So the Characters in which this King is set forth, do not only agree to the Mosaical, but also to the Evangelical Dispensation. The Predictions in my Text contain the Description of a Christian Prince; if he makes the *Messias* his Pattern, he will conform his Government to this Standard of Prophecy concerning him.

We have here all that is great and good, all that is valuable or desirable in Government. Impartial Justice in the Administration at home; the generous Defence of such as are destitute of the Means of preserving themselves, and a steady pursuing the *Oppressors* of Mankind, till they are *broken in pieces*; utterly disabled to carry on their pernicious Designs. This is more copiously enlarged on in the following parts of the Psalm. *He shall deliver the Needy when he crieth, the Poor also and him that hath no Helper. He shall spare the Poor and Needy, and shall save the Souls of the Needy. He shall redeem their Soul* (or Life) *from Deceit and Violence, and precious shall their Blood be in his sight.* Here is a noble Model, by which Princes ought to form themselves, and their

Ver. 12, 13, 14.

People

People ought to have the perfecter Joy in them, and the greater Confidence in their Conduct, the nearer they ſee them come to it. We have a Deſcription of the *Meſſias* in the Viſions of *Iſaiah*, not unlike this in my Text. xi. Iſaiah 4. *With Righteouſneſs ſhall he judge the Poor, and reprove with Equity for the Meek of the Earth. ----And with the Breath of his Lips ſhall he ſlay the Wicked.* The Word rendred in our Tranſlation *Oppreſſor* is by the *Seventy* and the Vulgar rendred the *Sycophant* or *falſe Accuſer*, by the *Syriack* the *Tyrant*, and by the *Arabick* the *Criminal.* Every one of theſe Rendrings may be of uſe, to give us the compleat Idea of an Enemy to Mankind. Here we have a beautiful View of a glorious Government, I had almoſt ſaid of our own. It is true, the *Oppreſſor* is not yet *broke in Pieces*, but if we are not wanting to our ſelves, and to that Conduct of Providence which we do now celebrate, we may hope, from the Advances already made, to ſee this finiſhed in due time.

What a Curſe has it been to Mankind, as well as it is an inverting the Ends of Government, that ſo few have copied after this great Original! Can it be ſuppoſed that any are ſet over others, but for the Good and

Happineſs

Happiness of their People, and the Safety of their Neighbours? and that a due Ballance may be kept among them, so that none of them may outgrow the rest, or have them too much at *Mercy*? Can any think that Princes are raised up to that Exaltation of Glory and Dignity, only to gratifie their restless Ambition, their boundless Desires, and their ravenous Projects? The *Alexanders* and the *Cæsars* may be proposed as Patterns to those who are upon the false scent of Glory; but what a Plague has it been to the World, that those who would pass for God's Representatives, have chosen rather to carry on them the Characters of *Abaddon* and *Appolluon* to be the Devourers and Destroyers, rather than the Deliverers and Preservers of Mankind?

Alexander upon no Provocation invaded a great Empire, that was surfeited with Wealth, and enervated with Luxury. His Insolence grew with his Success, and became insupportable even to his *Greeks*. He was for some Years the Scourge of the Age; but tho' he desired to pass for an Immortal Man, and the Son of *Jupiter*, he did not long outlive his Return to *Babylon*, but was poysoned by his Captains, who shared his Spoils among them without any Regard to his Family.

Cæsar

Cæsar had a deeper management, and a greater Mind, but all was Craft and Perfidy. It is true a Conspiracy against his Country, its Laws and Liberty succeeded in his Hands, and upon his Advantages he govern'd himself with much Dexterity and great Art; but his Designs appearing too soon and too evidently a Conspiracy against himself, was conducted with the same Success that his against his Country had been, and he fell a Victim to Treachery and Ambition. Those false Heroes, who were as unhappy in the Conclusion, as they had been prosperous in the Progress of their Fortunes, have, as it were, bewitched the Men in Power and Authority, to follow their Examples and to tread in their Steps.

How long and how much has the World suffered by these Maxims? What havock have they made of Nations? and what Scenes of Fire and Blood have been acted by Men, who might have been publick Blessings, the Darlings of Mankind, and the Glories of human Race? How have they abused the Power trusted to them by God and Man for the good of the Community? They begin with their own People, they oppress and enslave them that they may be the fitter Instruments of their Cruelty, the more zealous to oppress and

enslave others; hoping that by such Services, their own Miseries may become the less uneasy, and the more supportable to them. Princes who govern themselves by such Maxims do certainly render their own People miserable, but they are not so sure to succeed in their Designs on their Neighbours. They may at some time or other turn terribly upon them; for a Nation exhausted by a long tract of War, and dispirited by all the Contrivances of Oppression, will prove an unequal Match to a free and injured Neighbour.

Should they succeed and conquer! What is Conquest but a false Gloss, put on the worst and blackest of Crimes, Injustice, Robbery, and Cruelty? It is scarce possible to imagine, how a Man can be guilty of a Sin more heinous in it self, of a more complicated Nature, and attended with more dismal Consequences, than to be the Author of an unlawful War. All the Violence that is done, all the Blood that is shed, with all the Train of Wickedness that follows War, is certainly to be charged on the unjust Aggressor. How heavy must that Load lie?

But what a blessed Reverse to all this does appear in a Government framed and conducted by the Rules here set forth. A Sovereign possessed

ſeſſed with theſe Principles, has the Good of his People ever in his View. All his Councils and Deſigns are directed to promote this. He feels all their Happineſs as his own. He thinks he has a Property in it all. He wiſely foreſees and guards againſt Dangers at the greateſt diſtance. He bears a ſenſible Share of all the Troubles and Loſſes of his People. Theſe raiſe in him tender Compaſſions, eſpecially if they follow upon any Error or ill Conduct of his own. This will give him a real Agony.

Panegyricks, Statues, or Triumphal Arches, are mean things to Men of exalted Minds; they deſpiſe thoſe Expreſſions of Slavery and Flattery; they feel a Joy of a nobler ſort when they ſee their People happy, and when all acknowledge that it is procured to them by their Prince's means; of ſuch it will be ſaid without Flattery, for God has ſaid it, *Ye are God's.*

Theſe *judge even the Poor of the People*, they hold that Ballance even and ſteady; they aſſign for the deputed part of Judgment, *Men fearing God, hating Gifts, and eſchewing Covetoufneſs*: In Caſes that come under their own Eyes, and are reſerved to their Deciſion, they do Juſtice without *Reſpect of Perſons*, to the *Poor* as well as to the *Rich*. The meanneſs of the Perſon that praies it, recommends him to their Fa-

vour and Compassion, so far are they from despising or neglecting any because they are poor. The just Prince admits all easily, he hears them patiently, he weighs every thing calmly, and determines with such Integrity, that Justice flows from the Throne like a Stream, watering all with its Moisture, and rendring all Industry, and every good Design fruitful.

It is the peculiar Happiness of a well constituted Government that there are settled Boundaries, and established Checks to restrain and over-awe those on whom Corruption or Frailty might otherwise prevail too much. It is scarce possible for human Nature to keep within due Bounds, where the Power is without Controul. Some Princes may perhaps have Virtue so radicated in them, that how absolute soever their Authority may be, they will employ it all for the good of the Community: Yet this cannot last long, if it has no other Bottom but the Will and Pleasure of the Prince.

From *Nerva*'s time down to *Marcus Aurelius*, the *Roman* Empire had for above fourscore Years the best Succession of Princes that we find in History; yet all the good that these did, was soon overturned by *Commodus*, in whom Arbitrary Power appeared in its natural Colours, Luxury and Cruelty.

Happy

Happy we! and yet more happy if we had a juſt ſenſe of it! who live under a Government, well ballanced, and ſteadily managed; where Juſtice and Mercy meet together, and temper one another; where the pooreſt are not afraid to complain, and the greateſt are not above the reach of Juſtice; where the courſe of Law is free, and the proper places for Redreſs are well known.

The Second Branch of the Character of a Prince conform to the *Meſſias*'s Standard is, *He ſhall defend the Children of the Needy*, the doubly miſerable, who are neceſſitous by entail: Neither they nor their Fathers are able to ſupport them. If a Prince is in a helpleſs ſtate, an Orphan feeble in himſelf, and forſaken of all; if his Dominions lie exposed, and ſeem a convenient Acquiſition; if the Conjuncture is favourable, and the Oppoſition is like to be inconſiderable, this will ſeem ſo inviting to thoſe Beaſts of Prey, the Conquerors, that they will imagine they have a right to all that others have not a force to maintain. Thoſe Men of Rapine, the Wolves and Lions of our Race, do with an unrelenting and inſatiable Fury, devour the Honeſt and Induſtrious, little practiſed in the Arts of War, and leſs acquainted with the Methods of Invaſions, who may think

think they are safe, because they know they are innocent.

These will be quickly swallowed up by them, if they are not within the reach of a just and merciful Prince, who thinks it not enough for him to make his own Country safe and happy, but looks on himself as bound by the Ties of Nature and Humanity, of Compassion to the Miserable, and Regard to the common Interests of Mankind, to vindicate an injured Neighbour, a broken Alliance, and a perfidious Invasion; to defend the Fatherless, and to rescue the Oppressed; to *redeem their Lives from Deceit and Violence*, and to shew his Horror at Blood unjustly shed.

It is true, War in general is contrary to the Spirit and the Design of the Christian Religion; yet the Magistrate would *bear the Sword in vain*, if he might not punish what is done abroad, against Treaties, against the Laws of Nations, and the Rights of his Neighbours and Allies, as well as the Crimes committed at home against his own Laws. The Good and Safety even of his own People, being more concerned in the one than in the other. The robbing a Kingdom is more criminal in it self, and of more mischievous Consequence than that on the High-way; which is Petty Larceny

Rom. xiii. 4.

ceny compared to the other. A ſingle Murther is far ſhort of a Commiſſion given for Slaughter, and to execute whole Countries: A new Phraſe, to which the Barbarity of former Ages did not riſe up, but is well ſuited to modern Practices. War againſt ſuch Hoſtility to Mankind, is in its Original and Nature ſtill defenſive.

How glorious is the *Defence!* when it is undertaken with a pure regard to Juſtice, and to the preſerving a due Ballance; without any pretence to Conqueſt, or even to Cautionary Towns, for refunding a vaſt Treaſure, laid out in the Defence of helpleſs Neighbours, far above what they can repay, tho' they ſhould mortgage themſelves for their Ranſom.

When *Abraham* went to reſcue captiv'd Kings, to recover the Spoil, and deliver the Priſoners, and ſucceeded in the Attempt, he took care of his Allies who had ventured with him, and he abated for the Subſiſtence of his Men; but as to his own part, when the reſcued Kings out of a juſt Gratitude, put every thing in his Power, he reſtored all to them, even to the ſmalleſt matter, with this heroical Expreſſion, they ſhould not ſay *They had made* Abraham *rich.* Gen. xiv. 14. to the end.

It will be reckoned among the laſting Glories of this Nation, that we ſaw one great War ended

ended without any Demand for Repayment, or the leaſt View of Intereſt, Ambition, or any other Advantage whatſoever, beſides the Safety procured to us at Home, and the Security given to thoſe Abroad.

This is the true Sublime of Generoſity, when thoſe who are reſcued from Tyranny and Oppreſſion, feel that they have not only changed Maſters; but that they have paſſed from Slavery to Liberty, and from Violence and Rapine to Eaſe and Quiet. How theſe Meaſures of Government are purſued in the preſent Adminiſtration, needs not be opened or enlarged on; the thing it ſelf ſpeaks, all ſee and feel it.

The Third Branch of the Prophecy, in which the nature of the *Meſſias*'s Kingdom is foretold, is, *He ſhall break in pieces the Oppreſſor*, the *Tyrant*, the *falſe Accuſer*, and the *Criminal*. Every one of theſe Rendrings carries in it ſomewhat that is ſo odious, that the Conjunction of them all in one, muſt give Ideas full of Horror. We need not run far in viewing the preſent State of the World, before we ſhall find ſuch certain Indications, as cannot miſlead us in fixing this Character.

A ſure one is, if a Prince has given full Scope to Pride and Inſolence, has encouraged all the Exceſſes of Flattery, has ſuffered himſelf to be called

called *the Immortal Man*, his *Divinity*, and *the King of Glory*, with many other blasphemous Indecencies practis'd of late, beyond any thing that we find done since the Days of *Caligula* or *Heliogabalus*.

If this Prince has broke thro' all the Liberties of his People, debased all their Judicatories, invaded all their Properties, and subjected every thing to his own Will and Pleasure.

If he has violated all that was most sacred in Government, in the face of irrevocable Edicts, secured by his Coronation Oath, confirmed by many solemn Promises, joined with Acknowledgments of great Services, done by those of his Subjects, against whom nothing but the Matters of their God was ever pretended: If he has let loose all his Fury upon these, condemned them to Dungeons and to Gallies, to the Fire and to the Wheel, only because they could not yield to a barbarous Force, and in spite of Conviction and Conscience turn to the King's Religion; which was the Argument chiefly urged by the Missionaries of that Cruelty, the Dragoons. Of this I may speak with the more Assurance, having been an Eye-witness of those Scenes of Horror. If we know to whom all this belongs, we have one full view of an *Oppressor*: If we will look at him in another Light, we will find him out by an Age of Wars, which were all unjust and perfidious in their Original,

as well as inhumane and cruel in their Progress.

A General Peace seemed to put an end to War; upon that a Marriage was made, and an Oath was taken, renouncing all Claim of Succession by it; yet that was broke thro' upon a feigned pretence of the Preference due to the Females of the first Marriage. The Invasion began at the same time that the Designs of it were solemnly denied at the Court chiefly concerned. Here was the first War: Conquests were easily made, where a feeble Orphan could make no Resistance.

The Alarm that this gave awaken'd all the World; we seemed to feel it, and in Conjunction with the States most concerned, put a stop to a farther Progress. All that was demanded by him being yielded, a new Peace was concluded. Soon after that, a Project was laid against the States, who had given no other Provocation, but because they had taken care to secure themselves by preserving a Barrier. No Colour could be found to justifie an Invasion, against the Faith of many Treaties and a long Alliance. The *Glory* of the Prince was all that was pretended.

Upon this the second War broke out with such a Torrent, that if the Conduct had answered the first Successes, those Blessed Provinces must have become a Prey. God raised up indeed a mighty Deliverer, who rescued them out of the Paw of the Lion.

Upon

Upon a change in the face of Affairs a new Treaty was opened; but so managed, that it was visible it was intended only to dissolve a great Alliance; and to lay the Allies asleep: fraudulent Practices were but too successful. Peace was again made, but Hostilities went on still. In full Peace two of the most important Places, that secured the Empire and the States were taken; and at the same time an infamous course of Forgery and Violence was set on foot on the pretence of Dependencies and Re-unions. The Empire being uneasie at these Infractions, was threatned with a new War, unless they would confirm those unjust Acquisitions. That great Body was not then in condition to resist such an Invasion, so they agreed to confirm all by a Truce, for a term of Years, which is a full Peace during the Term. This procured them only a short, as well as a false Interval of Quiet.

Strasbourg, Luxembourg.

A third War was begun without the least Colour of a Breach on their side: Nothing was pretended besides the unaccountable Apprehensions of a War, designed by one of the weakest Princes of the Empire. Here we may view the Oppressor in a clearer Light, that was more visible and sensible to us, by the great Share we bore in that long and devouring War.

When the Impatience of some, and perhaps

the worse Designs of others, made a farther Progress uneasie: Then a fourth Peace was concluded. At the same time the Emissaries of the false Accuser were every where at work: Jealousies were infused, Distractions were raised; and these had fatal Effects in more places than one: All disarmed again, while the Oppressor, who saw what was approaching, kept up a mighty Force. In our weakned and disjointed State, our Great Deliverer thought, that of two Evils the least was to be chosen. So a Treaty was made, with a particular Provision, that no Will nor Testament in opposition to it should be accepted. This was no sooner agreed to than Practices were set on foot, to procure such a Will, true or forged, which was no sooner published and offered than it was accepted; and that was coloured with an Excuse that aggravates the Perfidy. *That the Spirit of the Treaty was considered preferably to the Letter or Words of it.* Framed no doubt by a Society well practised in such Disguises.

When all this Deduction of four great destructive Wars, begun with so much Injustice, and five deceitful Treaties all perfidiously broken; when, I say, all this is laid together, we see very evidently, to whom the Character of an *Oppressor*, with all the other various Rendrings of the *Word*, do manifestly agree. If all the particular Instances of

of every Breach of Articles, Capitulations, and Cartels were to be brought in to the Account, it would ſwell yet to a far greater Bulk.

It remains next to be conſidered what is meant by the *breaking the Oppreſſor in pieces:* Leſs certainly cannot be meant, than the diſabling him to perſiſt and go on in his Oppreſſion; and not to give him that Reſpite and thoſe Intervals, that by long and dear Experience, we may know, he only deſires, that he may recover himſelf, and recruit his Forces, and then return to his former Practices, as ſoon as a falſe Peace may put him in condition to proſecute them, and to take ſevere Revenges for what's paſt.

There is no Peace, ſaith God, to the Wicked: Till what is perfidiouſly ſeiſed on is reſtored, till the Exiles are recalled, the Priſoners are ſet at Liberty, till the Edicts that were their Inheritance are revived, and Compenſation is made for the *precious Blood* that has been ſhed among them, till the *Oppreſſor* is ſo bounded, that his own People are ſecured from Oppreſſion, and his Neighbours from Invaſion; till this is done, it is reaſonable to hope that Man will ſay as God has ſaid, *There is no Peace to the wicked.* Iſ. lvii. 21.

There is a memorable Paſſage in the Hiſtory of the Kings of *Iſrael* that deſerves our Attention. When *Benhadad* King of *Syria* had invaded *Ahab*

at

at the same Rate of Justice and Decency, that has been observed by the modern *Oppressor*, the first Declaration of War being in these Words, *Thy Silver and thy Gold is mine, I will send my Servants who shall search and take away whatsoever is pleasant in their Eyes.* That King, tho' the worst of all that reigned over those Tribes, being thus attackt, had as a Prophet promised him, in the Name of God, in two succeeding Years two entire Victories; or to speak in our own Stile a *Hochstet* and a *Ramillies*; and a great part of the *Syrian* Army perished under the Walls of *Aphek*, a Town we may imagine not unlike *Turin*. The proud Invader was so broken with these Losses, that he beg'd not only Peace, but his Life, in a very abject manner, calling himself *his Servant Benhadad*. *Ahab*, by an ill-timed Generosity, accepted his Submissions, and believed his Promises. He treated him as a *Brother*, and a Peace was soon concluded: All he could ask was granted. Upon this a Prophet was sent to him with this severe Message, *Thus saith the Lord, because thou hast let go out of thy Hand, a Man whom I appointed to utter Destruction, therefore thy Life shall go for his Life, and thy People for his People.* The Articles of Peace were not kept, nor were the Towns restored. And when *Ahab* went to possess himself of one of them, he was killed in Battel, and the

1 Kings xx. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

V. 13.

V. 20, 21.

V. 32.

V. 32.

V. 42.

Syrians

Syrians had a full Revenge in the following Reign; as was foretold by *Elisha*, *They burnt the strong Holds of Israel, they slew their young Men, they dashed their Children, and ript up their Women with Child.* The Kings of *Israel* had the Reputation of being *merciful Kings*, and perhaps their People were uneasie by Reason of the War; but they soon felt, and that very sensibly, the Effects of an undue Compassion, of an unreasonable Confidence, and of a hasty and ill-secured Peace.

1 Kings xxii, 3, 34. 2 Kings viii. 12. 1 Kings xx. 2. 31.

These things are written for our Example: It is to be hoped, that none will think the Work is done, till Justice is done to Mankind, and till the *Oppressor* is put out of a Capacity to return to be any longer the Plague of the World, as he has been for near half a Century, more than Famines, Earthquakes, and Pestilence.

We do now all see, and feel the Effects of that Haste with which we run formerly into a precipitated Peace, and put an undue Confidence in a Faith that was so little to be depended on. We see what Advantages this gave, and the mistrust that it created at home, which has brought us under an uneasie After-Game; and we may justly apprehend more fatal Effects if we shall fall again into the like Error, the last would be worse than the first.

It is true, *Peace* is a Word of an agreeable sound

ſound, it ſtrikes and has Charms in it. God forbid, that any who carry the Name of a Chriſtian, ſhould reſolve againſt all Terms of Peace whatſoever. It would ill become a Miniſter of the *Prince of Peace* to ſound the Trumpet of War; but a falſe deluſory *Peace*, a *Peace* in which any Confidence is put in a Faith ſo often and ſo impudently broken, a *Peace* that may lay us open to new Wars, and may involve us in new Dangers; ſuch a *Peace* is certainly an Opiat that may give a preſent Quiet, but that will have a terrible awakening, if it does not make us ſleep *The Sleep of Death*.

There is a *Mercy* that is *cruel*, not only to the reſt of Mankind, but even to thoſe who are the Objects of it; and a juſt Severity may be a Bleſſing, not only to reſt of the World, but even to thoſe on whom it falls heavieſt. It may bring them to ſuch Reflections on themſelves, as may render them capable of that Mercy which they do ſo much need; and it may put them out of a Capacity of encreaſing their Guilt, or of enhanſing their Puniſhment, which muſt come on them heavily ſomewhere, here or hereafter.

And why ſhould any deſire to ſtop the Progreſs of the Glory of a Triumphant Reign? that has every Year ſhined out, in a Courſe of wiſe Counſels, and great Deſigns happily executed: But beyond all

all Example in this MARVELLOUS, MARVELLOUS YEAR: which has been a continued Chain of Prodigies. It did begin with a Face black enough to have intimidated Persons less brave, than those who encountred it.

In several Places Matters ran very near the last Extremities, and were brought to the Edge of the Precipice. That seemed to be ordered by a special Direction, that the Interpositions of Providence might appear more signally, when they were reserved to the critical Minute. On the side of the *Oppressor* they were so assured of Victory, that they departed from their usual Methods, and ventured on the Decision of one Great Day. That ended gloriously in a compleat Victory, and added new Lawrels to our famed General, and new and most important Acquisitions, by his Conduct, to our Allies, and a new Scene of Glory to our Renowned Queen.

Victory alone is a thing bright and full of Lustre: but what Words can fully set forth the recovering great Provinces, and the taking strong Places almost in as few Days as they cost Years formerly? Towns well fortified and well furnished held us not so many Days, as our Enemies lost Weeks in the Siege that ended so fatally to them; and all this with such inconsiderable Loss on our side, that it scarce deserves to be brought into the Account.

It is true we run one great Risk; which might have changed an entire Victory into a total Defeat: So much is one Man of more value than many thouſands. The happy Reſcue that came ſo ſeaſonably, gives us reaſon to conclude, that a Life of ſuch Importance to us all, is under the watchful Guard of Providence.

The Bleſſed Reverſe of thoſe promiſing Appearances, and Hopes with which our Enemies flattered themſelves in the beginning of the Year, the great Progreſs made in it, and the Glorious Concluſion of it, may be well looked on as Pledges that Heaven is on our ſide. That God goes forth with our Armies, and fights our Battels, that he defends the Cities of our Allies, and defeats the Deſigns of our Enemies, and that he is *pouring Contempt on ſome Princes*, while he is *crowning Ours with Glory and Honour.* An Ardour of Courage ſpread thro' the Armies of one ſide, while a diſpirited Feebleneſs runs thro' the other, has been always looked on as the particular Work of Providence: From this we may give our ſelves juſt Hopes that the next Year ſhall prove yet more proſperous, than even this has been. Happy Providences alone are no Arguments; but when they are ſignal and ſurpriſing, on the ſide of a juſt and righteous Cauſe, we may more certainly rely on them, and may draw

draw favourable Inferences from them, in our Hopes of what is yet to come.

The long and great Prosperity of the *Oppressor*, was one of the dark Riddles of Providence, which was no doubt a stumbling to many who saw it, but more to those who suffered by it. God is now decyphering this to us. We do now see, that how well soever that formidable Greatness seemed to be established, yet to speak in the words of the next Psalm, it was *set in slippery places*, so that all may now cry out, *How are they brought into Desolation as in a moment, how are they utterly consumed with Terrors?* Ps. lxxiii. 18, 19.

In God let us put our Trust, and in him let us rejoice: *He has shewed Strength with his Arm, and has scattered the Proud in the Imagination of their Hearts.* S. Luke i. 51. He has often delivered us, and we may depend on it, he will still deliver us, if we do not by our Insensibility and Ingratitude, by our Factions and Murmurings, as well as by our other Sins, defeat the Designs of Providence, and render our selves unworthy, and indeed incapable of enjoying and improving these amazing Blessings, that are the Wonder of the whole World.

This Nation seems to be the peculiar Care of Providence: What signal Blessings have followed us ever since the Reformation was first settled among us? What surprising Discoveries, as well

as Deliverances, have happened ever ſince the laſt glorious Revolution? And what an aſtoniſhing Progreſs of Succeſs and Victory do we ſee in the preſent Reign?

What may not yet be expected from a QUEEN that offers up the Praiſe of all the Wonders of her Reign to that GOD under whoſe Protection ſhe humbly puts her ſelf, and whom ſhe ſo ſolemnly and conſtantly worſhips? Who ſeems to have no other reliſh of the Greatneſs of Power, but as it puts her in a Capacity of doing much Good Abroad as well as at Home. Her Reign has been hitherto one continu'd Flood of Proſperity, without any Ebb, or Mixture of Misfortunes. We ſee in it likewiſe a courſe of noble Projects, for the Good and the Happineſs of Her People, well begun, and ſteadily carried on. Her firſt Care was to reſcue her Clergy from Poverty, and its Conſequences, Ignorance and Contempt. With what Zeal has ſhe for ſome Years purſued the Deſigns of Uniting Her Kingdoms into one Body, as well as all Her Subjects into one Mind? Oh when ſhall both be happily effected!

Late Poſterity will feel the Effects of this; and will acknowledge that theſe great Bleſſings ſeem to be Felicities reſerved by Heaven to make Her Reign as much more glorious, than that even of the celebrated Queen of the laſt Age, as that

was

was beyond any thing either in our own History, or in any other whatsoever. May it but exceed it as much in its Length as it does surpass it in Glory!

What may we not expect, I say, from a QUEEN, who is the Delight and Admiration of all Her Subjects: under whom the Honour of the Nation is raised beyond all that ever went before Her? And Who is so constantly, as well as cheerfully supplied, and now beyond the Example even of our best Times, by that GREAT BODY, who by their Zeal and Duty to Her, prove themselves to be the true Representatives of Her People: Who is also possessed of the profoundest Respect and Veneration from that ILLUSTRIOUS BODY, that receives the greatest Communication of Honour from the CROWN. No Succession of it, in any Age, paid a perfecter Return of Duty than they now do to the HEAD that carries it with so particular and so awful a Lustre. The Harmony within these BODIES, and between them, is not only a hopeful Augury, but is the real Support and Strength of the Throne.

Under such a Direction, and with such an Assistance, what may we not look for from a General that has the happy Mixture of the greatest Arts, or rather a Nature, and Genius

superior

Superior to all Art; by which he has procured to himself, both an entire Credit with those over whom he has no Authority, and the Universal Love of those whom Her Majesty has put under His Command. He leads them out to Victory, he exercises them in glorious Fatigues and Conquests, and when he has lodged them in safe Quarters, he comes over to us, and lets us see that all the new Accessions of Glory cannot alter that beautiful Modesty that makes every thing else shine the brighter. And as he offered up the Praises of all his Successes to God, in many repeated Solemnities of Devotion, so he seems scarce willing to take that share of them to himself that is so justly due to Him.

Under such a Head, with the noble Train of gallant Officers, and a brave well disciplin'd Army, we may still humbly hope for a Continuance of Victory and Success. Nor have we less Reason to promise our selves every thing that is great, from our floating Castles, while they are under such Conduct, and so well commanded. Especially since the Nerves and Sinews of all are so well supplied, by a prudent Management, and an entire Credit at Home.

Our nearest and surest ALLIES, do bear their Share, how heavy soever, with so much Patience, in so close a Conjunction with us, and so absolute

absolute a Confidence in our General, that Practices, which at other times have had a fatal Influence, are now visibly ineffectual.

These PRINCES that are united with us in the same Concerns of Religion, and are joyned to the Crown in the greatest nearness both of Blood and Interest, have been hitherto so true to us, and to themselves, that the present State of Affairs in those Parts, gives us Cause rather to expect a new Accession of Strength from thence, than to apprehend any Diminution.

That Heroical PRINCE, who deserves so well his Rank among Crowned Heads, who has so eminently distinguished himself beyond all Example (to remember the Words of our Sovereign) who put all to hazard, and was very near being reduced to the same ill State, to which we see some of the Instruments of the *Great Oppressor* are brought; He who with a *Noble Branch* of his own Royal House, has ventured and suffered so much, and now so gloriously recovered all; He, I say, who adhered so firmly to us in the last Extremities, cannot in this happy reverse of his Affairs, be capable of forgetting the Hand that saved him, nor the Nation that furnished out the Army, with which he now Triumphs and Conquers.

These are the best Grounds on which any human

man Confidence can rest: Our Hopes are on a
Ps. cxliv. 10. surer bottom; we trust in the *Living God who*
Psal. xxi. 1,6,7,8,9. *gives Victory to Kings. The* QUEEN *does rejoyce in thy Strength, O Lord,* and we trust she shall yet have Cause to *rejoyce greatly in thy Salvation. Thou hast already made Her exceeding glad with thy Favour. She* still *trusteth in the Lord,* therefore we hope that *thro' the Mercy of the Most High she shall not be moved,* but that *Her Hand shall find out all her Enemies, that the Lord shall swallow them up in his Wrath, and that the Fire shall devour them.*

May we all learn from Her Example to *Con-*
1 Sam. xii. 24. *sider how great things God has done for us, that we may fear the Lord, and serve him in Truth with our whole Heart.* Let us again renew our solemn Vows in the humblest and sincerest manner, that when *God shall deliver us from our Enemies and the Hand of them that hate us,* we will *serve him in Holiness and Righteousness all the Days of our Life.* Let us conclude all as the *Psalm* ends, *Blessed be the Lord God, who only doth wondrous things; and blessed be his glorious Name for ever, and let the whole Earth be filled with his Glory.* Amen *and* Amen.

F I N I S.